



City of Charleston
South Carolina

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PUBLIC INFORMATION

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City of Charleston Pedestrian Safety Program

In April of 2007, the City of Charleston kicked-off its Pedestrian Safety Program which focuses on education, engineering and enforcement. The purpose of the Pedestrian Safety Program is to bring awareness to both drivers and pedestrians by implementing safety initiatives within the City.

As a continuation of pedestrian safety initiatives, the City of Charleston evaluated the "crosswalk flags" concept that began in Salt Lake City in 2000 in an attempt to enhance pedestrian safety at crosswalks and to heighten awareness of pedestrian crossings. The intersection of Calhoun Street at Courtenay Drive sees a significant number of pedestrians utilizing the intersection and having to interact with a significant amount of vehicular traffic that uses both Calhoun Street as well as Courtenay Drive.

At the intersection of Calhoun Street and Courtenay the City installed LED countdown pedestrian signals as well as defined the crosswalks with high visibility markings. In order to further heighten the awareness of pedestrian crossings at this intersection, the City is teaming up with Roper Hospital to kick-off the "crosswalk flag" initiative at Calhoun and Courtenay.

The principal idea for the Crosswalk Flag is simply that the pedestrian crossing the street carrying an orange flag will be safer by being made more visible to drivers. Additionally, having the flags located at the corners of the intersection will tend to draw driver's attention to locations where pedestrians would be standing while waiting to cross. As pedestrians attempt to cross the streets they pick up a flag from the container and cross the street by either waving the orange flag or just holding the flag in such a manner that it may be visible to drivers.

The purpose of initiating crosswalk flags in the City is to enhance pedestrian safety at Courtenay and Calhoun Street with the hopes of reducing vehicle-pedestrian conflicts and preventing future accidents. Costs: The cost of implementing the crosswalk flag initiative for the intersection of Calhoun and Courtenay is relative inexpensive. Each flag cost approximately \$2 and the flags are 18" x 18" with a 30" wooden handle. The total implementation cost for one intersection is approximately \$300.

The City has created a partnership with Roper Hospital for this program. This fine institution has agreed to "adopt" the intersection by continuing to restock and maintain the flag availability in the future. The majority of the pedestrians utilizing this intersection are either employees of Roper Hospital and/or patients and visitors of the hospital. Roper Hospital CEO Matt Severance said, "This additional implementation by the City of Charleston to enhance pedestrian safety is an important partnership between the city and the hospital. We are

concerned about the safety of our employees, patients and visitors and are confident that increased driver awareness will provide a safer crossing.”

Additional improvements are expected at the intersection of Calhoun Street and Courtenay Drive where the City will install an overhead sign that will be illuminated as pedestrians cross busy Calhoun Street. Hernan Pena, Director of Traffic and Transportation said, “This is a continuation of our aggressive city-wide pedestrian safety program. We feel confident that the flag crossing initiative will heighten safety and driver awareness for those pedestrians who use this intersection on a daily basis. I would also like to personally thank Lt. Chip Searson from the Charleston Police Department for suggesting this initiative for Charleston.”

This is yet another component of the City’s Pedestrian Safety Program in an attempt to bring further awareness to pedestrian safety in the City. Since the City kicked-off its Pedestrian Safety Program, the following are some of the initiatives and work that has taken place.

- Installation of new LED and countdown pedestrian signals at signalized intersections.
- Installation of bright yellow-green warning signs at pedestrian crosswalks.
- All school crossings within the City have been upgraded with new thermoplastic material for high visibility.
- All crossing guards working at school crossings within the City have received “in-street” pedestrian crossing signs for placement in the crosswalks.
- The City recently completed the study to convert Rutledge Avenue and Ashley Avenue from one-way streets to two-way operation which should improve walkability within the neighborhoods.
- Implemented pedestrian safety program that included the completion of brochures for both pedestrians and drivers.
- Completed pedestrian safety posters specifically designed for school children that will be distributed to all Charleston County Schools within the City of Charleston.
- Distributed smaller versions of the pedestrian safety posters designed for school children at the First Day Festival for City of Charleston school children.
- Distributed pedestrian safety brochures to various agencies and locations including City recreation facilities, City offices, and the College of Charleston with plans to distribute to the Charleston Visitors Center, MUSC, and Roper Hospital, and others.
- Secured \$200k Safe Routes to School grant from the SCDOT and the FHWA for Stono Park Elementary in West Ashley to promote safe walking to school.
- Participated in the City’s official recognition of White Cane Day.
- Acquired \$10,000 Grant from the Bikes Belong Organization for the construction of the East Bay Street Bicycle and Pedestrian path.
- Participated in the “Walking School Bus” event that encourages students and parents to walk to school.
- The City has continued with enforcement in high pedestrian activity areas.

FOR MORE INFO:

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